

(1)

Ent 9.

Innocency Vindicated;

OR,

Reproach wip'd off.



Assembly of Elders, Messengers, and Ministering-Brethren, sent by and concerned for, more than one hundred Baptized Congregations of the same Faith with themselves, from many parts of England and Wales, met together in London, (from Sept. 3. 1689, 1689) to consider of several things relating to the well-being of the same Churches. And having that Opportunity, judged it their Duty to clear themselves from those Reproaches cast on them, occasioned by the Weakness of some few of their Perswasion, who in the late King's Reign, were employed as Regulators of Corporations, &c. for the Support of his Dispensing Power.

THere having been many Reflections cast upon us, under the Name of *Anabaptists*, as such, as having in the late Times, for our Liberties sake, complied with the Popish Party, to the hazard of the Protestant Religion, and the Civil Liberties of the Nation: We being met together, some from most parts of this Kingdom, judge it our Duty to clear ourselves from the said Reflections cast upon us. And we do first declare, That to the utmost of our Knowledge, there was not one Congregation that had a Hand, or gave Consent to any thing of that Nature, nor did ever countenance any of their Members to own an Absolute Power in the late King, to dispense with the Penal Laws and Tests; being well satisfied, that the doing thereof by his sole Prerogative, would lay the Foundation of Destruction of the Protestant Religion, and Slavery to this Kingdom.

But yet we must confess, that some few Persons (from their own Sentiments) which were of our Societies, used their Endeavours for the

the taking off the Penal Laws and Tests; and were employed by the late King *James* to go into divers Counties, and to several Corporations, to improve their Interest therein; but met with little or no Encouragement by any of our Members: though, considering the Temptations some were under [their Lives being in their Enemies Hands; the great Sufferings, by Imprisonments, Excommunications, &c. that did attend from the Ecclesiastical Courts, as also by the frequent Molestations of Informers against our Meetings, by means whereof many Families were ruined in their Estates, as also deprived of all our Liberties, and denied the common Justice of the Nation, by the Oaths and Perjury of the vilest of Mankind] might be some Abatement to the severe Censures that have attended us, though if some amongst us, in hopes of a Deliverance from the heavy Bondage they then lay under, might miscarry, by falling in with the late King's Design. It being also well known that some Congregations have not only reproved those among them that were so employed, but in a Regular way have further proceeded against them. From whence it seems unreasonable, that for the Miscarriage of a few Persons, the whole Party should be laid under Reproach and Infamy. It being our professed Judgment, and we on all Occasions shall manifest the same, to venture our *All* for the Protestant Religion, and Liberties of our Native Country.

And we do with great Thankfulness to God acknowledg his special Goodness to these Nations, in raising up our present King *William*, to be a blessed Instrument, in his Hand, to deliver us from Popery and Arbitrary Power; and shall always (as in Duty bound) pray that the Lord may continue Him and his Royal Consort long to be a Blessing to these Kingdoms; and shall always be ready to the utmost of our Ability, in our Places, to joyn our Hearts and Hands with the rest of our Protestant Brethren, for the Preservation of the Protestant Religion, and the Liberties of the Nation.

*William Kiffin,
Hanserd Knowllys,
Andrew Gifford,
Robert Stead,
Thomas Vauxe,
John Tomkins,
Toby Wells,
George Barret,
Benjamin Keach,
Samuel Buttrill,
Isaac Lamb,
Christopher Price,*

*Robert Keate,
Richard Tidmarsh,
James Webb,
John Harris,
Thomas Winnel,
James Hitt,
Edward Price,
William Phipps,
William Facey,
John Ball,
William Hankins,
Paul Fruin.*

London, Printed by J. Darby, MDCLXXXIX.